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FINAL REPORT

The Comparative Analysis of Military Career Patterns:

Final Report on AF-AFOSR 1166-66

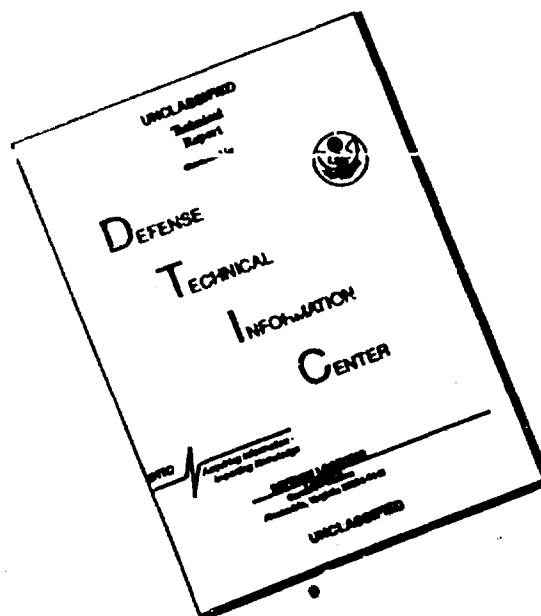
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The Comparative Analysis of Military Career Patterns:

Final Report on AF-AFOSR 1166-66

This report summarizes the work accomplished on AF-AFOSR 1166-66 during the period June 1, 1966 to August 31, 1969.

X. Societal Structure and Military Professionalism: A Comparative Study of British and United States Air Force Organization.

Inevitably the social and occupational structures of a society directly influences the structure of its military systems. The present study specified basic criteria for military professionalism so as to compare the Royal Air Force and the United States Air Force in terms of these attributes. Using similar research techniques, 556 United States Air Force officers and 180 Royal Air Force officers, each group stationed at bases with comparable formats and identical organizational objectives, were surveyed. Information gathered directly from these officers constituted the basic data of the study.

A post-industrial society with a highly professionalized social and occupational structure creates the conditions necessary for the development of an equally highly professionalized military system. Military systems of high professionalization have the following attributes:

1. Movement within the hierarchy is characterized to a considerable extent by achievement on the basis of actual performance rather than on the basis of ascribed qualities such as sex or birth order.

2. Decisions focus to a greater extent on universalistic standards, that is, relatively objective criteria derived from a specialized body of knowledge are emphasized in place of relatively subjective criteria. Specifically, this means that more emphasis is placed on formal education and rigorous technical training both as means of acquiring specialized knowledge and as indicators of eligibility for promotion within the system.

3. Key roles are characterized by the possession of broad organizational and management skills that are transferable across a large range of types of organizations. The focus is increasingly on administrative and technical abilities that are broadly based rather than on narrow and uniquely military attributes.

4. Decisions are governed less by self-interest and more by consideration of broader public interests.

Measures of degree and quality of professionalization of the first three characteristics noted above were applied uniformly to the officers of the British and the United States Air Force. No data were gathered on the fourth attribute. On all three indexes the Royal Air Force officers were found to be highly professionalized but different in their characteristics from the United States Air Force officers. Specifically, we found as follows:

1. Even when appropriate controls were applied to take into consideration key differences in the two nations' educational systems, United States Air Force officers evidenced much greater formal education than did their British counterparts. Moreover, amount of formal education was more likely in the United States military to be instrumental in attaining upward mobility.

2. In addition officers of the two nations differed significantly in their evaluations of those attributes seen as characteristic and not characteristic of a career in the military service. United States Air Force officers observed that opportunities for graduate schooling and for scientific and technical research were characteristic of a career in their service, while British officers observed that these same opportunities were not characteristic of a career in their service.

3. United States officers with the same years of experience and pilot skills as their British counterparts had a significantly broader based range of duty assignments. These reflected possession of more transferable

types of administrative and technical skills. Moreover, they were more likely to view a military career as requiring knowledge and skills similar to those required in other types of organizations, such as business concerns.

In general Royal Air Force officers evidenced a much earlier commitment to the military than their American counterparts. Since they did not have as great a degree of formal education, they tended to have fewer contacts and opportunities for careers elsewhere than in the military. Hence the strength of their commitment to a military career was greater. Because of the more broadly-based technical and administrative skills of the United States Air Force officers, their relationship to the military tended to be weaker. Hence, the American military was on the whole both a highly professionalized and a more civilianized type of organization.

II. Career Patterns in the Royal Navy.

A ten percent random sample of all Royal Navy officers of less than field rank stationed in England in 1967 were surveyed. In addition all officers of field rank were contacted. Data were obtained from a total of 434 of 723 officers (a return rate of 66.9%). Basic changes are taking place in Britain's Royal Navy. Three changes seem especially noteworthy:

1. A pressure toward greater democratization of the armed forces which reflects similar changes taking place in civilian society.
2. A change in Britain's defense policy from a focus on world-wide affairs to a more regional, a more limited, and European-based orientation.
3. A general decline in the level of prestige of the military in comparison with other occupational careers.

The present findings were directed mainly toward an examination and comparison of the career patterns of the younger vs. the senior officers in the Royal Navy. The major findings were as follows:

1. A significant relationship was found between attainment of high rank and level of family social background. In general, the higher the rank of the officer the higher was the occupational status of both his father and his wife's father and the greater the formal education of his father. High-ranking officers were disproportionately recruited from upper social class strata. In contrast lower level officers reflected a much broader range of social backgrounds. Although panel studies of the same population over time are essential for more precise results, the present data suggests the availability of a broader recruitment base for high-ranking positions than existed in the past.

2. Today's high level officers not only came to a disproportionate extent from upper-class families, but they were more likely than their lower level colleagues to have come from a family with a distinct military tradition. Hence this group cited family influences as most crucial to their career selection. Moreover, this group were more likely than the others to observe that "love of the sea" was a key factor in their decision to follow a career in the Royal Navy. It was in a military family that such a strong and special type of commitment developed. An early commitment to a military career, one made before the age of ten years, was considerably more common among senior than junior officers. We found that lower level officers not only had a weaker but also a more pragmatic conception of their career than did senior officers. They viewed a military career as more like other careers rather than as a special "calling." Their view tended to be an instrumental one rather than an orientation that defined their career primarily as a unique opportunity to perform a service. Junior officers were more likely than senior officers to cite reasons of career advantage and economic security as motivating elements in their personal decision to follow a military career.

3. The career experiences of junior and senior officers differed greatly. All officers provided information on the kinds of duty assignments they had held during their entire service in the Royal Navy. The types of assignments listed included sea duty, combat, command, staff and planning, logistics and supply, administration, and engineering and technical duties. The first three were termed heroic assignments because they reflected uniquely military assignments. The next three were termed managerial because they involved problems of control over personnel. And the last were of a technical nature. We found that senior officers, despite their greater opportunities for varied experience because of their greater length of service, had a significantly different pattern of duty assignments than did junior officers, even when branch of service was held constant. A significant proportion of senior officers had almost exclusively heroic career experiences. Junior officers, in contrast, had a broader range of organizational experience. The absence of officers with considerable technical experience at the higher ranks and the high concentration of officers with heroic experience was viewed as of considerable significance to an understanding of the unique orientations and values of the elite nucleus of officers of the Royal Navy.

III. Social Stratification and Military Socialization: A Study of Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

This case study of the British Army's military academy emphasized the significance of social stratification for the effectiveness of official organizational training. The general hypothesis was proposed that the greater the congruence between the cadet's status of origin (family status) and his status of destination (career status), the more adequate would be his overall adaptation to the academy's requirements. The research was based on nine months of field work by Maurice Garnier under the principal

investigator's direct supervision. The techniques of participant observation, focused interview, questionnaire, and analysis of official records, were used.

The following specific hypotheses were examined:

1. Cadets of high social and educational background were more likely than those of lower background to be selected for cadet leadership positions.
2. Cadets of high social and educational background were more likely than those of low background to experience an easier adaptation to the academy.
3. Cadets of high social and educational background were more likely than those of lower background to appraise their performance as excellent or good.
4. Cadets of high social and educational background were more likely than those of lower background to conform to the academy's official ideological standards.

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 4 were strongly supported while the third hypothesis was rejected. In general, the data demonstrated the strong effect of traditional and aristocratic values on cadet behavior at the academy. Cadets of elitist social background, because of the staff's commitment to these values, experienced an easier adjustment to the official organizational requirements than did those with a more humble background. The importance of aristocratic values and traditional values for the maintenance of the regimental system of organization in the British Army was documented by examining in detail the process by which cadet social background affected the regimental selection process at the academy.

Completed and Forthcoming Publications

Roy A. Hansen, Military Culture and Organizational Decline: A Study of the Chilean Army, University Microfilms, 354 pp., 1967.

_____, "Military Culture and Political Intervention," Paper submitted to Transaction.

_____, "Public Opinion and the Roles of the Military," Paper submitted to Social Forces.

_____, "Military Culture and Military Politics," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Boston, Massachusetts, 1968.

Maurice A. Garnier, Social Stratification and Military Socialization: A Study of Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1969.

C. Grusky, "Heroes and Managers: A Study of Military Career Perspectives," Center for Social Organization Studies, University of Chicago, 27 pp.

_____, "Societal Structure and Military Professionalism: A Comparative Study of British and United States Air Force Organization," (in preparation).

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13. ABSTRACT Three large-scale studies were undertaken. The first was concerned with the relationship between social structure and military professionalization. This research involved the comparative analysis of two similar Air Force bases, one in Great Britain the other in the United States. A model was described presenting basic criteria for military professionalization. The Royal Air Force officers, although highly professionalized, were found to be significantly different on the major criteria applied from those of the United States Air Force. The relationship between professionalization, civilianization, and career commitment was examined. The second study examined career patterns in the Royal Navy. 484 officers of all ranks were surveyed. Significant relationships were found between family social background and career mobility. Senior and junior officers differed with respect to family background, family emphasis on military tradition, types of career experience, and other variables. The implications of these differences for the future direction of the Royal Navy was explored. The third study was a detailed analysis of Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, based on an intensive nine-months field research by Maurice Garnier. The main findings documented the effects of traditional aristocratic values on the adaptation of various types of cadets to the Academy's requirements. The regimental selection process was also studied.			

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